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Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern University



Men's Basketball Preview: Eagles Land in Atlanta Saturday

GS has not won at Georgia State since 1992.

Marc Gignac

Men's Basketball

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**Georgia Southern (14-5, 5-1) vs. Georgia State (13-6, 4-2)**

**Saturday, Jan. 20, 2018 - GSU Sports Arena (3,854) – 2:15 p.m.**

**Series:** GS leads 42-18, L1

**Last Meeting:** 3/4/17, L 67-72 (away)

**Television:** [ESPN3](#)

**Radio:** GS Sports Network (pregame show starts a half hour before tipoff) - WMCD 107.3 FM (Statesboro), 630 AM WBMQ (Savannah), 1370 AM WLOP (Jesup)

[Live Video](#) | [Live Audio](#) | [Live Stats](#) | [Twitter Updates](#)

[Georgia Southern](#)

[Georgia State](#)

[Roster](#)

[Roster](#)

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[Schedule](#)

## Probable GS Starters:

#0 [Montae Glenn](#)

#2 [Mike Hughes](#)

#3 [Ike Smith](#)

#4 [Tookie Brown](#)

#10 [Jake Allsmiller](#)

## Setting the Scene

- Georgia Southern caps a three-game road swing at Georgia State Saturday. Tipoff is scheduled for 2:15 p.m., and it will air live on ESPN3.
- It's the first of two meetings between the Eagles and Panthers this season, and one point is on the line in the Southern vs. State Rivalry Series, which State leads 6.5-0.5.
- It's the end of a stretch in which the Eagles open Sun Belt play with five of seven on the road. GS closes the regular season with seven of 11 and five of seven contests at

home.

- The Eagles are 6-4 in true road games and 8-5 away from home. Through games Jan. 16, GS's six true road wins are tied for the second-most in the country.
- GS is 4-1 in its last five and coming off a 60-59 win at Appalachian State Saturday. The Eagles are tied for second in the Sun Belt standings.
- As of Jan. 15, the Eagles are ranked 14th in the CollegeInsider Mid-Major top-25. Gonzaga is ranked first, Louisiana is fourth, ETSU is fifth, Missouri State is 12th and Towson is 17th, while UTA, Georgia State and Texas State are receiving votes.
- Georgia State is 4-1 in its last five and coming off a 72-58 victory at Coastal Carolina Saturday.
- Picked tsecond in the Sun Belt Preseason Poll, Georgia State is in fourth with a 4-1 record.
- The Panthers are 6-1 at home and 2-0 in home league games. State is 63-15 at home under Ron Hunter.
- Georgia State leads the league in field goal percentage defense and ranks second in scoring defense.

### The Series

- Georgia Southern leads the all-time series, which began in 1948, 42-18, but the Panthers are 9-5 in the last 14 meetings and have won four of the last six.
- Georgia Southern is 10-11 at Georgia State and has lost the last seven, dating back to 1992.
- Georgia State topped the Eagles 38-36 in the 2015 Sun Belt Championship. It was the lowest-scoring Sun Belt game since the shot clock era began.
- Four of the Eagles' last five wins in the series have all been by four points or less, and two were in overtime. Three of the last 11 meetings have been decided in overtime.
- Georgia Southern was 16-3 against the Panthers from 1985-1992, when both schools were members of the TAAC.

### Team Storylines

- Ten of GS's 19 games have been decided by six points or less, and the Eagles are 6-4. Seven have been one-possession games, and the Eagles are 5-3.
- Georgia Southern ranks 14th in the nation in offensive rebounds, and [Montae Glenn](#) ranks fifth in the country. The Eagles are second in the SBC in rebounding and first in offensive rebounds, and their rebound average of 40.2 is the highest since the 2001-02 season and a 5.5 rebound per game improvement from last year (34.7).
- GS ranks second in the SBC in free throws made. The Eagles are 13th in the nation and first in the SBC in free throws attempted.
- GS is averaging 77 points a game, the most since the 2005-06 season. The Eagles have scored over 80 points six times, over 90 three times and over 100 twice. GS ranks fourth in the SBC in scoring and second in scoring margin.
- Georgia Southern ranks third in the SBC in fewest turnovers, second in turnover margin and fourth in turnovers forced.
- Georgia Southern's top-3 seasons in 3-pointers made and attempted have all come during [Mark Byington](#)'s tenure. GS is fifth in the SBC in 3-pointers made and fifth in attempts this season and has made 10-plus triples in a game seven times this season.
- [Mark Byington](#) is coaching in his 160th career game today and his 149th at Georgia Southern. He is 10 wins shy of 100 for his career, and his 51 wins in his first three seasons at Georgia Southern were the best of any coach in the modern era. He posted a 7-4 record at College of Charleston in 2012, filling in as the interim coach for Bobby Cremins.
- Under [Mark Byington](#), Georgia Southern is 59-12 in games when leading at half and 69-6 when leading with five minutes to go.
- GS returned the Sun Belt's top two scorers in juniors [Ike Smith](#) (19.6 ppg) and [Tookie Brown](#) (17.1 ppg). The 2017 first-team All-Sun Belt selections are the fourth-highest scoring returning duo in the country. They were the third-highest freshman scoring duo in the country in 2015-16 (1-Rice's Marcus Evans and Marquez Letcher-Ellis, 2- FSU's Dwayne Bacon and Malik Beasley).
- GS reached double-digit wins before the new year for the first time in school history. The Eagles' 10th victory of the season was an 86-80 decision at Troy Dec. 30.
- GS joins UTA and Louisiana as the only three teams to reach double digit wins in conference play in each of the last three seasons and has the third most victories (36) against league competition during that time.
- Since joining the Sun Belt in 2014, 32 Georgia Southern games against Sun Belt schools have been decided by five points or less, and the Eagles are 21-11.
- The Eagles are 29-5 in Sun Belt games when leading at halftime. GS is 31-1 when leading with five minutes to go.
- GS has a combined record of 38-17 in Sun Belt games played in January and February since joining the league in 2014-15.
- GS went 9-4 in non-conference games. The last time the Eagles won nine non-conference games was in the 2005-06 season.
- Georgia Southern played six straight contests on the road in December and posted a 3-3 record. The last time the Eagles played six straight true road games was December of 1963, and the Eagles were 1-5 that year.
- The Eagles capped the non-conference portion of their schedule with four straight games on the road, a trip that encompassed 14 days, 11 cities and 7,500 miles. The Eagles played at George Mason (Dec. 12), CSU Bakersfield (Dec. 16), Kennesaw State (Dec. 19) and ETSU (Dec. 22) and went 2-2.
- The Eagles have opened conference play on the road in three of their four years in the league.
- The Eagles' 85-83 victory at Wake Forest was their first over an ACC opponent since topping Virginia Tech 83-78 on the road in 2012. Byington was an assistant coach for the Hokies at the time.
- Georgia Southern's 120 points against Bluefield State were the most in a game since 1974.
- GS started 5-0 for the first time since the 1991-92 season.
- The Eagles' 74-51 win at George Mason Dec. 12 was the Eagles' largest margin of victory on the road since an 86-61 win at Furman in 2006.
- All Sun Belt Conference matchups are doubleheaders with the women's teams with the exception of the Georgia State contest Feb. 9, in Hanner Fieldhouse on ESPN2 at 9 p.m.
- WSAV-CW in Savannah will televise the Eagles' Saturday home games for the remainder of the season. All Saturday home games tip off at 5 p.m.

### Stat Stuffers

- [Mike Hughes](#) is on track to become the first player in Georgia Southern men's basketball history to tally 1,200 career points, 500 rebounds, 200 assists and 100 steals. The senior needs six assists.
- [Jelani Hewitt](#) (2010-15) collected 1,810 points, 499 rebounds, 340 assists and 252 steals, and [Eric Ferguson](#) (2010-15) finished with 1,482 points, 727 rebounds, 116 assists and 157 steals.

### Next Up

- The Eagles finish the regular season with seven of 11 contests at home, starting Thursday, Jan. 25, against Texas State at 7:30 p.m.
- It's Salute to Heroes Night – All active duty and veteran military personnel, police officers, firefighters and EMS receive free admission with valid ID and may purchase discount \$5 general admission tickets for either game or \$10 for both games for family members.

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